



Tempe Community Council

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Task Force on Disability Issues Minutes January 21, 2004

In Attendance:

Tempe City Council Members: Vice Mayor Barb Carter, Councilmember Pam Goronkin and Councilmember Ben Arredondo

Resource Persons: Gary Davis, City of Tempe

Task Force Members: Mary Jo Jerde, Nancy Puffer, Arloa Siers, Linda Spears, Bonnie Guzelf, Mike Franjevic, Mary O'Connor, Rich Nolan, Raissa Devereux, Kathleen Green, Marcia Barry, Margaret Taylor-Webb, Joseph Harris, Nancy Black, Scott Greeves, Jacque Olson, Linda Bergevin, Lee Burge, Jo Ann Eilers, and Roger Boylan

Tempe Community Council Staff: Kate Hanley, Executive Director, Martha Cronin, Lead Staff, Management Assistant, Steve Wise, Resources Coordinator and Amanda Baldwin, Administrative Assistant

Handouts:

Task Force on Disability Issues Agenda

Meeting Schedule/Timeline

Resources Roster

"Phoenix Tops 63 Cities as the Nation's Most Disability Friendly City" Press Release

"10 Disability Friendly Cities – Where to Live and Why" By Cindy McCoy, New Mobility

"People with Disabilities in Tempe" PowerPoint Presentation

I. Call to order and Introductions:

- Kate Hanley, Executive Director of the Tempe Community Council called the meeting to order at 4:36 PM
- Ms. Hanley thanked everyone for responding to the invitation to serve on the most recent task force, the third in the series. The first was 1 year long study of the homeless, the second was a nine month study on aging, and this will be about 6 month study because there has been a lot of work done by the Mayor's Commission on Disability Concerns already.
- Co Chairs: 1 not identified yet, 1 board member is asked to be a co chair, and ask one citizen to co chair as well. That co chair position has not been filled yet
- 3 members of city council, round the table introductions
- Ms. Hanley introduced Linda Spears, Tempe Community Council Board Member, former City Council member, former Co Chair on a task force

II. Charge to Task Force on Disability Issues:

- Ms. Spears thanked the group for agreeing to participate in this process. Ms. Spears then introduced Vice Mayor Barb Carter for opening remarks from the city council members.
- Vice Mayor Carter thanked everyone for their time and commitment on behalf of Mayor Neil Giuliano and the City Council. She discussed the fact that we don't often consider people with disabilities when we talk about diversity. We all know the laws; but rarely consider the human element.
- City Council wants to know:
 - Is Tempe following the letter of the law?
 - Council needs to know whether there is accessible, affordable housing available.
 - Are there employment and training opportunities for people with disabilities?
 - Is recreation and culture accessible to people with disabilities?
- Has spent 25 years of her professional life teaching students with disabilities, and has a question she would like answered for her personally: Her concern is: are individuals who have disabilities embraced by the community they live in? Are they invited to participate in activities in the community and participate as volunteers? Has seen many of your faces, and knows you are involved. As a city what can we do better to make sure all people with disabilities feel included into the life of our city? The city council is looking forward to the report in October.
- Vice Mayor Carter introduced Councilmember Ben Arredondo.
- Councilmember Arredondo stated that this committee is very important, and the City Council understands the importance of what the committee is trying to do. He acknowledged that the task force is very fortunate to have Ms. Spears, Steve and Kate as resources.
 - There is one issue that Councilmember Arredondo will consistently push. He feels that before the light rail gets any funding he wants to make sure that three groups get to ride for free; the disabled, seniors and school children. Council Member Arredondo would rather see full busses than empty busses. This is the message Council Member Arredondo will carry to the Arizona State Legislature.
- Councilmember Pam Goronkin commented that she has a friend who is in a wheelchair, and knows that she has often been faced with discrimination and degradation. Councilmember Goronkin would like the task force to consider more than just following the law, and providing access but to work to ensure that persons with disabilities are accorded the degree of respect that anyone would expect

III. Tempe Disability Demographics

- Ms. Spears introduced Steve Wise for a power point presentation. A hard copy of the PowerPoint presentation was provided in the handout packets.
- After Mr. Wise completed the PowerPoint presentation, he opened the floor to questions and comments.

- Ms. Spears commented that in the course of the upcoming meetings the group will be frequently referring back to the demographics.
- Michael Franjevic wanted to know what percentage of people with disabilities in Tempe volunteer, or is there even data out there that would have that information.

IV. Distribution of Reference Packet

V. Task Force Process and Timeline

- Ms. Spears introduced Martha Cronin to explain the process of the Task Force on Disability Issues.
- Ms. Cronin showed the blue Reference Packets that were picked up at the beginning of the meeting. She explained that they contain the following:
 - Meeting Agenda
 - Comprehensive Timeline – This timeline is shorter than that of previous task forces; this group has the advantage of having a lot of support and resources that could be drawn from prior to the beginning of the task force. Several task force participants are also members of the City of Tempe Commission on Disability Concerns. The Task Force on Disability Issues has been included as an item on the Commission's agenda since September, and they have been able to provide focus for the issues that need to be addressed.
 - The next meeting, on February 18, and the one on March 17, will feature our resource persons in panel format. Ms. Cronin is hoping that this will provide the opportunity for lots of give and take and a lot of synergy for the people to discuss all the issues. These meetings have been broken down into priority areas as developed by the Commission on Disability Concerns.
 - On February 18, the areas of concern will be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance and enforcement, city infrastructure and capital maintenance, which includes such things as curb cuts, bus stops and sidewalk maintenance, recreation, public art and culture, and opportunities for children. Our experts will have experience in these areas and will be able to bring knowledge and information.
 - On March 17, the areas of discussion will be transportation, employment and training and information exchange and coordination.
 - Those eight topic areas have been highlighted as the areas of greatest need. The final report will be organized into those areas.
 - During the April and May meetings there will be back and forth and discussion. These meetings will be for the formulation of the recommendations. One or both of these meetings will be professionally facilitated.
 - The report will be drafted in the summer, and the task force may be called for additional meetings during the drafting process. The draft will then be available for public comment. The report will then go to the City Council in the fall, either October or November of this year.

- A list of the Resource Persons is in the packet; this list was developed with input from the Commission on Disability Concerns. The people on this list have been sent a letter and some forms to complete to provide what their area of expertise is, and what panel they would like to serve on.
 - Ms. Cronin asked that if the Task Force members had any additional people they would like added as resource people to please get their information to her so that the letter may be sent out and they can be included.
- Ms. Cronin referred to the “Phoenix Tops 63 Cities as the Nation’s Most Disability Friendly City” Press Release in the packets. The features and qualities that helped Phoenix achieve that honor were highlighted in the article.
- The next item in the packet was another article “10 Disability Friendly Cities – Where to Live and Why” by Cindy McCoy of New Mobility Magazine.
 - The National Organization on Disabilities did their own survey on disability friendly cities, and Phoenix does not appear on that list. Ms. Cronin wanted to bring this article to everyone’s attention for examples of what other cities have done. The target areas of these cities are the same areas that have been identified as areas where Tempe has the greatest need, such as transportation, housing being accessible and affordable, recreation and resources. Each of those areas are ones that people indicated made their city more accessible for the disabled community.
 - Ms. Cronin pointed out that this is not just for people with disabilities, but that when you have a strong community which does well in all of those areas, it benefits everyone. This makes lives easier and better for every single resident that lives in the community, not just those with disabilities. The goal is to help create a better Tempe for everyone.
- Ms. Cronin then opened the floor for questions on the task force process and the information that was presented.
- Mary O’Connor requested that those who are in attendance today should speak to Ms. Cronin about suggestions for making material formats accessible for everyone. Also, there need to be improvement in making documents, presentations, and the room set-up more accessible. The committee should follow the same practices that it is trying to promote.
- Ms. Cronin asked that everyone let her know how best to get the information to the task force members. Clearly, as a Task Force on Disability Issues, we want to be a model of accessibility and will continually strive to do better. She asked that everyone feel free to offer input so that this process works for everyone.
- Jo Ann Eilers asked what cities did make the New Mobility list. Ms. Cronin referred to the article, and found that Denver, Colorado, was ranked highest. Some of the features that were listed as to why included; centers for independent living, a fully accessible metro transportation system; Denver has an organization called Adapt that works to ensure accessibility. Denver also has a wide range of recreational activities, such as hiking trails that are accessible.
- Ms. Spears had a few comments regarding the importance of the Task Force and what it has been asked to do. When the city identifies the areas of concern, as part of the people improvement plan, they are more likely to make the

recommendations of the task force budget priorities. Once the recommendations have been accepted they become part of the budgeting process. For those of you who participated on a previous task force, this task force is a little different in that we do not have to identify the major areas in which to make recommendations. The Commission on Disabilities has already done that and working within the framework of those objectives, the Task Force will develop the recommendations. If there is something that was not included, it can of course be added.

VI. Future Meeting Schedule

- In regards to the time schedule, while the goal was to be respectful of people's time, the schedule can be extended. If there needs to be a June meeting, that can be done. No one should feel pressured to complete everything by May. The goal is to make sure that the objectives are met and that what is given to the city really represents what the citizens of Tempe want. Ms. Spears encouraged the members to talk to their friends and neighbors so that their views will be brought to the table. For the report to be inclusive, what Task Force Members bring from their communities is very important. If there are people that Task Force member know or have worked with that could be added to the list of resource people that have been selected, please get that information to Ms. Cronin.

VII. Public Comment

- Ms. Spears announced that this meeting was an introductory meeting and would finish early. Ms. Spears asked that if anyone is interested in becoming the co-chair they should contact her. Ms. Spears then opened the floor to general questions.
- Rich Nolan wanted to fill in broad strokes for the Task Force as to how the Commission on Disabilities got to the identified areas of need.
 - The Commission spent several months looking over broad topic areas in terms to determine the areas of greatest need? What should the Task Force attempt to deal with that is rational and achievable?
 - Mr. Nolan wanted to encourage the members if they feel something is missing to bring the topic forward to Ms. Cronin and Ms. Spears's attention as soon as possible so it can be incorporated it into the meetings. The Commission attempted to limit it to issues that are achievable or issues are a problem in Tempe that have not been addressed yet in order to provide a place to begin. This was TCC's charge to the Commission to try and not burden the task force with two or three meetings of creating a wish list and narrowing the wish list down.
- Raissa Devereux commented about the March 17 meeting which covers employment and training, and asked that telecommuting be incorporated. Transportation is often an issue for those with disabilities. The information on opportunities to work from home is not widely available to the community. Information on how to work outside the workplace would be helpful. Many telecommuting jobs involve needing to be available twenty four hours a day seven days a week, are not legitimate, or are free lance. Most offer no health insurance, are not full time, or require going to a worksite two or more days a week, which is

not always an option. More information on full time opportunities to work home and get benefits is needed.

- Mike Franjevic stated that the General Plan 2030 now has a separate accessibility element, and has strategies and objective that the Task Force can use. The General Plan will not be approved until the May election.
- Ms. Spears commented that Ms. Cronin will provide an excerpt of what is included in the General Plan at the next meeting.
- Kathleen Green asked how the format of the presentations and discussions would be.
 - Ms. Cronin explained the vision of what the Task Force is attempting to do. To discourage having a parade of experts presenting their agencies without the benefit of a more holistic view, the presentations will be made in a panel format, so everyone has the benefit of everyone else's input. The Task Force will be able to draw on the expertise of the panel.
 - Ms. Spears suggested based on those discussions, that if there are specific follow up questions that need to be asked, they can be submitted in writing. Then all of the information that needs to be rehashed can be discussed at the last two scheduled meetings. At that point there will be the discussion to see what advice will be taken from the experts and used in policy creation. We see things experts don't see, so while it is important to listen to them, they are just a reference point. The policy recommendations will come from this group as a whole, not from the professionals.
 - Ms. Green asked in response when the discussion of the panel presentations will occur. Ms. Spears stated that discussions will occur during the meetings, and that staff will provide detailed minutes for notes. If clarification is needed, the Task Force will go back to the experts for more information.

VIII. Adjourn

- Linda Spears adjourned the meeting at 5: 37 pm